

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 306028  
ORIGIN SS-25

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY  
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS  
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY MADRID  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 306028

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, AG, MO, USUN, SS

SUBJECT:SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR

1. BENGELLOUN'S PRINCIPAL INTEREST IN BRIEF MEETING  
DECEMBER 22 PRIOR DEPARTURE ON CONSULTATIONS WAS IN UNDER-  
LINING HIS GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE FOR A U.S. RESPONSE TO ITS  
ARMS REQUEST. HE SAID MOROCCO COUNTS ON U.S. TO HELP IT  
MAINTAIN REGIONAL EQUILIBRIUM WHICH NOW UPSET BY ALGERIAN  
ACQUISITION OF SOVIET WEAPONS BOTH DIRECTLY FROM SOVIETS  
AND VIA LIBYANS. HE MENTIONED IN THIS CONTEXT CURRENT  
VISIT TO TRIPOLI AND ALGIERS OF SOVIET CHIEF OF STAFF.  
MOROCCANS ARE PEACEFUL, BENGELLOUN INSISTED, AND WANT U.S.  
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ARMS ONLY TO DEFEND THEIR NATIONAL TERRITORY. MOROCCANS  
NOT CONCERNED BY SITUATION IN MAURITANIA WHERE FRENCH ARE  
HELPING, BUT THEY ARE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR VULNERABILITY IN  
THE NORTH, NEAR OUJDA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN. ALGERIANS  
ARE UNHAPPY WITH KING'S POSITION ON MIDDLE EAST AND HAVE  
BEEN ATTACKING HIM. MOROCCANS ARE WORRIED ABOUT WHAT  
BOUMEDIENE MIGHT DO. BENGELLOUN CONTRASTED MOROCCO'S CON-

STRUCTIVE GEOPOLITICAL AND MIDDLE EAST POLICIES WITH THOSE OF ALGERIA AND NOTED GREATER SIMILARITY BETWEEN MOROCCAN AND AMERICAN FREE POLITICAL STRUCTURES THAN BETWEEN THOSE OF ALGERIA AND U.S. STATING THAT BOUMEDIENE

ABOUT TO VISIT ARAB CAPITALS TO ENCOURAGE RESISTANCE TO SADAT, AMBASSADOR CONCLUDED THAT U.S. KNOWS WHERE ITS FRIENDS ARE.

2. IN RESPONDING, SECRETARY SAID U.S. IN PROCESS OF MAKING FINAL DECISIONS ON MOROCCAN REQUEST AND OTHER MILITARY ASSISTANCE QUESTIONS. U.S. IS SENSITIVE TO MOROCCAN NEEDS AND SEES MOROCCO PLAYING A CONSTRUCTIVE GEOPOLITICAL ROLE. SECRETARY CITED PRESIDENT'S REFERENCE IN MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER OSMAN TO THE IMPORTANCE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS OVER AND ABOVE GEOPOLITICAL CONCERNS. ASKED BY BENGELLOUN IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE A FINAL DECISION ON THE MOROCCAN ARMS LIST PRIOR TO THE PRESIDENT'S DEPARTURE ON DECEMBER 29, SECRETARY SAID HE DOUBTED IT WOULD BE. HOWEVER, HE LOOKED FORWARD TO SEEING BENGELLOUN AGAIN WHEN BOTH RETURN TO WASHINGTON. BENGELLOUN EXPRESSED DESIRE DISCUSS LEGAL ASPECTS OF MOROCCAN POSITION. SECRETARY RESPONDED HE WOULD WELCOME OPPORTUNITY FOR SUCH AN EXCHANGE AS THERE ARE ELEMENTS HE DOES NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND.

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3. ON POLISARIO HOSTAGES, BENGELLOUN SAID UNSYG WALDHEIM HAD NOT REALIZED BOUMEDIENE HAD PROVOKED A DOMESTIC POLITICAL DISPUTE IN FRANCE BY ALLOWING FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY CHIEF MARCHAIS TO ANNOUNCE PROSPECTIVE RELEASE. ACCORDING TO BENGELLOUN, WALDHEIM APPRECIATES MOROCCAN OPPOSITION TO HIS INVOLVEMENT BUT FEELS HE MUST FULFILL HIS COMMITMENT.

4. BENGELLOUN ASKED IF SECRETARY HAD ANY SPECIAL MESSAGE TO CONVEY TO KING ON MIDDLE EAST WHICH MIGHT UPDATE WHATEVER WAS DISCUSSED BETWEEN KING AND AMBASSADOR ANDERSON DECEMBER 20. SECRETARY REPLIED THAT HE EXPECTS MEETING ON SUNDAY TO MAKE PROGRESS BUT IT IS UNREASONABLE TO BELIEVE, AS SOME PEOPLE DO, THAT SADAT AND BEGIN WILL RESOLVE ALL ISSUES IN ONE MEETING. SECRETARY SAID HE KNOWS BEGIN IS GOING TO EGYPT IN A REASONABLE FRAME OF MIND, AND HE BELIEVES SADAT ALSO WILL BE REASONABLE. HE EXPECTS THE MEETING WILL CONTINUE THE MOMENTUM OF THE PEACE PROCESS.

5. AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED KING HASSAN'S BEST WISHES FOR UNDER SECRETARY HABIB'S RECOVERY. SECRETARY VOICED HIS APPRECIATION AND INFORMED BENGELLOUN THAT HABIB HAS BEEN

TAKEN OFF CRITICAL LIST. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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